

SYLLABUS

Introduction to Christian Worship

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Teresa Lockhart Stricklen

Fall 2012

This course is an introduction to worship that explores biblical, historical, and theological issues that comprise worship in today's Christian churches. Emphasis will be upon forming pastors as liturgical theologians who can work like jazz musicians in their particular context, knowing how to improvise within the structures of our traditions' trajectories for vital worship and Christian life today.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: At the end of this course, successful students will be able to

- ✠ demonstrate knowledge of the historical formation of worship traditions through reading, lectures, discussions, quizzes, exams, projects
- ✠ articulate historic worship controversies and theological positions taken (quizzes, midterm)
- ✠ analyze a worship service for its historical origins, its theological content, its spiritual formation (worship analysis paper)
- ✠ articulate the purposes of worship (quizzes, midterm, worship analysis paper, final exam project)
- ✠ design and execute effective worship (reading, lectures, theological analysis)
- ✠ ritual project, quizzes, final exam project)
- ✠ be prepared to perform weddings, funerals, sacraments (quizzes, reiteration of sacramental oral formulaic, final exam project, prayer writing)
- ✠ demonstrate proficiency in the use of language, art, spatial arrangements, symbols in the planning of worship (ritual exercise, prayer writing, final exam project)
- ✠ discern appropriate cultural expressions for worship faithful to the trajectory of their tradition (quizzes, mid-term, final exam project, theological analysis of worship)
- ✠ write public prayers (prayer writing, final exam project)
- ✠ choose, edit, and write liturgy that invites encounter with The Holy through lively language and ritual action (final exam project, prayer writing, theological analysis)
- ✠ indicate awareness of the rhythmic flow and mood of worship (theological analysis, final exam project)
- ✠ be prepared to handle any surprises that may arise in a worship service with Christ-like goodness and grace (final exam project)
- ✠ embody the meaning of worship an assured confidence and authentic spiritual presence (final exam project)

These objectives will be met through reading, exams and quizzes, performance evaluation of the final project, written assignments, presentations, discussions, and lectures.

SOME WORKING ASSUMPTIONS:

- ✠ We are all God's children and as such deserve to be treated with respect and kindness in Christ.
- ✠ We come from different places and will not always agree. This is because we all see from our own particular point of view. Our neighbor helps us see things about the beauty of this multi-faceted reality called God that we may not see

from our own perspective. Therefore, we will welcome one another's perspectives with gratitude.

- ✠ This doesn't mean that we can't challenge one another's viewpoints. We are called to test the spirits in order to build up the body of Christ, speaking the truth, as we see it, in love, for the good of the gospel.
- ✠ We are Christian and thus cultivate a tolerant and loving community in the ways in which we treat one another. This takes more discipline with some people than it does with others, but the end result of a safe place where we can praise God together is worth it.
- ✠ What happens in worship class stays in worship class, especially if it's a hurtful or embarrassing story. We want to create a safe place in which to think, dream, express ourselves, experiment without fear of looking any more foolish than we already are.
- ✠ There's no such thing as a perfect worship service. If there were, it would be an idol, and we'd be worshipping worship, not God.
- ✠ God is bigger than our wildest imaginings, scripture tells us. Like parents lovingly treasure the art of their children, so God chooses to accept the meager offerings of our worship as a token of cherished love. Remember: it's all grace, folks.
- ✠ The language and rites we use in worship can only be approximations of the Divine Mystery that holds us in its grasp. God is not a Super Human. God is beyond our comprehension in human categories and words. Our words are but stumbling inadequate attempts to name the ineffable, yet by divine grace, the Lord chooses to use our words to be made manifest sometimes. Our words are offerings for divine use. Therefore, we will use inclusive language not just because it is our academic policy but because it is the most Christian thing to do. For centuries using exclusively male language for human beings has meant that those who were not male were rendered invisible or denigrated as sub-human by not achieving the male standard of humanity. Language not only reflects reality; it creates it. Because of the grace offered to all in the Word Jesus Christ that God has spoken, our Christian language is to create a space in which all humans are welcomed. Students are to use gender-inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication. When we forget (and we will), we will forgive and encourage one another to do better next time. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for further assistance, see http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp.
- ✠ The Almighty has called YOU to be here with all your creativity and intelligence and honest presence. So come to class. We are diminished by your absence. Take notice of the LPTS attendance policy in the seminary catalog.¹ If you have to miss more than three classes, consider dropping the course because your grade will be negatively affected. More importantly, your ability to lead people in worship will be hindered, and the church has enough problems in this area as it is. We don't need you to add to them.

¹ According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. If you're just flat-out skipping class because you've decided to try out Franciscan spirituality with a good romp in the park that involves preaching to the squirrels, Dr. Stricklen would just as soon not know.

- ✠ Because the Lord has called YOU in all your brilliance and human limitations, this means that you cannot steal others' stuff without the appropriate attribution. If you can't be you and present YOUR work, you have no business being in ministry. So if you cheat or plagiarize, the wrath of Dr. Stricklen will be visited upon you. If you do both, she'll go positively apoplectic. If you'd like this communicated in more formal style, here it is:

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Multiple occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see The Code of Student Conduct, 6.11; the Student Handbook, p. 19.²

- ✠ That being said, we use others' liturgy all the time, for these are the words of the church, not ours. So borrow boldly and wisely WITH ATTRIBUTION, USING FOOTNOTES in Turabian form. Dear Kate Turabian gave her life to setting forth cogent footnote forms so you don't have to invent them on your own. Consult her work:

Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

For questions regarding writing, see *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. Most of our writing will be of a more practical, less formal nature, but you need to know this book.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

- ✠ If you need accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability or for some kind of sensitivity or issue that will affect your learning, contact the Director of the Academic Support Center in the first two weeks (ext. 384, or drop by the office on the first floor of Schlegel). We'll work something out.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1 September 10—Welcome; Definitions; Purpose; Connections; Ritual space, time, things, words, actions.

2 September 17 — Presentation of worship space designs. Worship in ancient Israel. Early Christian worship.

Due: Ritual Space Assignment

Have read: Cherry, pp. 3-33, 205-218; Webber, pp. 13-31; White 41-74 (pictures of various worship spaces). Glance at Bradshaw, 88-101, if you can.

3 September 24 —History of Christian worship (continued)

Have read: White, 17-39. Cherry, 123-178

² I blatantly stole this from a document given to me by the registrar, Dr. Steve Cook, entitled "Policy Statements Included on Syllabi," Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, August 3, 2012. Author unknown.

4 October 1—Exam . Lectionaries. Daily prayer. Music.
Have read: Cherry, 179-203; White, 75-99; Bradshaw, 77-82

5 October 8— Our orders of worship. Music.
Have read: Cherry, pp. 35-121, Lathrop and Ross articles online.
Bring a hymnal to class—any pew edition of a denomination’s comprehensive hymnal from any era.

October 15—No Class. Reading Week.

6 October 22— Writing Liturgy. Sacraments, Sacramentals, and Special Services.
Due: Theological Analysis of Order of Worship
Have read: White, 119-144.

7 October 29—Baptism preparation, Baptism, Confirmation, Renewal of Baptism
Due: Prayer of Confession or Intercessory Prayer that you’ve written
Have read:

- “Baptism” in *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*
- your denomination’s materials on baptism, confirmation, renewal of baptism in your polity and worship book
- Bradshaw, 1-38

8 November 5—Eucharist and Service in the World.
Have read:

- “Eucharist” in *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*
- your denomination’s materials on Eucharist/Lord’s Supper/Holy Communion in your polity and worship book
- Bradshaw, 39-74

9 November 12—Exam. Worship and pastoral care: whose needs, how? Ministry with the sick and dying. Special human needs and holidays
Have read: start reading Webber due in two weeks.

10 November 19—Weddings and Funerals.
Have Read:

- Material from your own denomination’s funeral and wedding rites.
- Skim the book *African American Grief* to get the gist of the research method as well as the content. Read what interests you, as well as “Meaning Making,” pp. 71-85, and “God,” pp. 111-121. This is an excellent example of the things all pastors need to take into consideration as a pastor for the grieving in planning rituals at the time of death.
- Articles online on weddings and funerals

11 November 26—Spiritual formation. Planning worship. Use of multi-media. Special needs.
Have Read: Webber, 190-205, 30-189

12 December 3—The Jazz of Worship and current worship experimentation and issues.
Have Read [Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture](http://www.worship.ca/docs/lwf_ns.html), which you can find at http://www.worship.ca/docs/lwf_ns.html

Final Exam—Dec. 12-13 Sign up for a time to do your final project, which will be a performance of a sacrament.

ASSIGNMENTS

Design a worship space for a particular faith community that says who they are in Christ. Money is no object. Specify the community, noting its purpose and style. Pay attention to what items will be highlighted in the space and what these say theologically. Explain your choices. Consider the issues we raised in class today about what goes into planning good worship. Will your space function to do all that it needs to do? You will be evaluated on the thoroughness of your consideration of all the things that go into a good worship space plan. Visual presentations of floor plans and renderings and materials to be used are helpful. Explain your choices. This doesn't have to be a neat project or one that would win you artistic awards, just a clear one. You will present the design in class September 17.

Quizzes for basic knowledge based on your reading and past lectures will occur unannounced throughout the course. There are no make-up quizzes, so be there or miss out. We'll throw out one quiz score as a way to excuse those who must be absent for some good reason that only God needs to know.

Exams will assess your understanding of historical theological issues surrounding worship. October 1, November 12.

Theological analysis of the ordo. Visit a worship service of a community different from your own. Be sure to get a bulletin or PowerPoint copy if the order of worship is projected. Write a 2-3 page single-spaced theological analysis of the faith formed over time by that particular community's order of worship. Due October 22.

Write a prayer. Using the principles discussed for the writing of good liturgy, write either a prayer of confession to be prayed in unison, or an intercessory prayer comprised of a series of collects that are the prayers of the people. Due October 20

Final exam: Design a complete worship service for a particular community that you know. Provide the texts for all music and liturgy. One of the prayers must be original. This service is to have one of the sacraments in it that you will "perform" for performance evaluation as your final exam. You will not do the entire service, just one of the sacraments. This will be videotaped with notes given afterwards to help you think through the way in which you are physically leading in worship. In addition, notes will be given to help you think through certain aspects of the liturgy and how well it facilitates its aims. You may choose to lead a Eucharistic service for the seminary community to fulfill this assignment. Be prepared to handle any surprises that may arise spontaneously by an imaginative professor who's seen what can happen and who will be pushing you to think on your feet. The purpose of this activity is to enable students to

- think through everything that goes into a worship service
- plan the execution of a service
- choose liturgy contextually appropriate, fit for a particular community and its faith expression
- choose, edit, and write liturgy that fulfills the aims of worship
- choose, edit, and write liturgy that invites encounter with The Holy through lively language and ritual action
- articulate the purpose of worship

- indicate awareness of the rhythmic flow and mood of worship
- be prepared to handle any surprises that may arise in a worship service with Christ-like goodness and grace
- perform the sacraments in such a way that their meaning is embodied with an assured confidence and spiritual presence.

Due Final Exam time.

BOOKS:

Required:

Students' own denominational worship book (i.e. *Book of Common Worship*) and other guides for worship (i.e. Directory for Worship in the Book of Order as part of the Constitution of the PCUSA).

Bradshaw, Paul. *Early Christian Worship*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2010).

Cherry, Constance M. *The Worship Architect* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010).

Webber, Robert. *Planning Blended Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998).

White, James F. *Documents of Christian Worship: Descriptive and Interpretive Sources* (Louisville: WJKP, 1992).

World Council of Churches. *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*.

For Reference: *The Oxford History of Christian Worship* OR
The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship

Articles:

Call to Worship issue on marriage: 42:3 (2008).

Gordon Lathrop, "New Pentecost or Joseph's Britches? Reflections on the History and Meaning of the Worship Ordo in Megachurches." *Worship* 72:6 (1998), 521-538.

[Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture](http://www.worship.ca/docs/lwf_ns.html), which you can find at
http://www.worship.ca/docs/lwf_ns.html.

Ross, Melanie. "Joseph's Britches Revisited: Reflections on Method in Liturgical Theology," *Worship* 80:6 (2006), 528-550.

Willimon, Will. "Cleaning Up the Wedding," which can be read online at
<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1241>

Recommended (on reserve):

Battle, Michael. *The Black Church in America: African American Christian Spirituality*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006. Chapter on worship.

Benedict, Dan. *Come to the Waters* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003).

Black, Kathy. *Culturally Conscious Worship* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2000).

Bradshaw, Paul and John Melloh, eds. *Foundations in Ritual Studies* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) BV 10.3 .F68 2007

Costen, Melva. *African American Christian Worship*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007).

Johnson, Todd, ed. *Living Worship: A Multimedia Resource for Students and Leaders*. DVD.

Jones, Wainwright, Yarnold, Bradshaw, eds, *The Study of Liturgy* (Oxford: Oxford, 1992 rev. ed.)

Long, Thomas. *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral* (Louisville: WJKP, 2009).

*Rosenblatt, Paul and Beverly Wallace. *African American Grief* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

Scott, Margaret. *The Eucharist and Social Justice* (New York: Paulist, 2009).
 Stookey, Lawrence Hull. *Let the Whole Church Say Amen!* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001).
 White, James F. *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999).
 Witte, James. *From Sacrament to Contract*, 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012).

FINAL GRADE

The final grade for the course will be figured as follows. If the grade is close, your positive contribution in the course will work in your favor.

Worship Space Design	10%
Quizzes	15%
Exams	25 %
Order of Worship Analysis	10%
Prayer Writing	10%
Final	30%

A = 3.69 - 4.00 quality points
 A- = 3.35 - 3.68 quality points
 B+ = 3.01 - 3.34 quality points
 B = 2.69 - 3.00 quality points
 B- = 2.35 - 2.68 quality points
 C+ = 2.34 - 2.01 quality points,
 C = 1.69 - 2.00 quality points
 C- = 1.35 - 1.68
 D+ = 1.01 - 1.34
 D = .69 - 1.00
 D- = .35 - .68

PROFESSOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION:

You can reach me by email: Teresa.stricklen@pcusa.org or by calling 502) 569-5022. I will keep office hours before and after class on Monday in Schlegel 101. Otherwise, contact me to set up another time to meet.

**WORSHIP THE LORD IN THE
BEAUTY OF HOLINESS.**

Psalm 96:9

**GOD IS SPIRIT, AND THOSE WHO WORSHIP
THE LORD MUST DO SO IN SPIRIT AND IN
TRUTH. John 4:24**

**SINCE WE ARE RECEIVING A KINGDOM THAT CANNOT BE
SHAKEN, LET US GIVE THANKS, BY WHICH WE OFFER TO
GOD AN ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP WITH REVERENCE AND
AWE. Hebrews 12:28**